

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

B1  
concl. (e) providing an award for each award-yielding symbol combination appearing in said second set regardless of whether said award yielding symbol combination in the second set appeared in the first set.

Please amend Claim 4 as follows:

B2  
BSE 4. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of individually replacing the symbols includes individually replacing the selected symbols without spinning the reels.

Please cancel Claims 5, 6 and 8 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend Claim 12 as follows:

B3  
BSE 12. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of replacing each selected symbol includes individually replacing one of the other symbols on a plurality of reels, wherein said symbol functions as one of the plurality of symbols.

Please amend Claim 15 as follows:

B4  
BSE 15. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of replacing each selected symbol in the first set includes substituting a wild symbol for at least one other of the symbols in a row of symbols along a plurality of reels of the slot machine, wherein said wild symbol functions as one of the plurality of symbols.

Please amend Claim 17 as follows:

Sub.C2> 17. (Twice Amended) A method for operating a gaming device including a plurality of symbols, said method comprising the steps of:

- B5
- (a) maintaining in a controller of said gaming device a list of award yielding symbol combinations of said plurality of symbols;
  - (b) generating a set of said symbols, wherein one of said symbols in said set is a first wild symbol;

BS  
concl  
(c) providing an award for each award yielding symbol combination appearing in said set including the generated wild symbol which functions as one of the other symbols to maximize the award yielding combinations;

(d) selecting at least one but not all of the symbols in the set except for the first wild symbol in the set for individual replacement and individually replacing each said selected symbol with a second wild symbol; and

(e) providing an award for each award yielding symbol combination appearing in said set, including the wild symbols which replace other symbols and function as one of the symbols to maximize the award yielding symbol combinations.

✓ Please amend Claim 31 as follows:

Sub. C3> 31. (Twice Amended) A method for determining an award in a slot machine including a plurality of symbols and a plurality of award yielding combinations of said symbols, said method comprising the steps of:

B6  
(a) randomly generating on a plurality of paylines a first set of said symbols;  
(b) providing a player an award for each award yielding symbol combination appearing in said first set;

(c) selecting at least one but not all of the symbols in said first set for individual replacement and individually replacing each said selected symbol with one of the symbols; and

(d) providing an award for each award yielding symbol combination appearing in said second set including all award yielding symbol combinations in the second set regardless of whether an award was provided for such award yielding combinations in the first set.

✓ Please cancel Claim 33 without prejudice or disclaimer.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Please amend Claim 34 as follows:

Sub. 4 > 34. (Amended) A slot machine comprising:  
a plurality of reels and a plurality of paylines with the reels;  
a plurality of symbols on said reels, said symbols including a wild symbol;  
a plurality of symbol combinations that each yield an award if generated by said reels; and

B7  
a processor which controls said reels, wherein said processor: (i) causes the reels to generate a set of said symbols along the paylines; (ii) provides an award for each award yielding symbol combination in said set, said wild symbol functions as at least one other non-wild symbol; (iii) substitutes another one of the non-wild symbols in said set with another wild symbol; and (iv) provides an award for each award yielding symbol combination in said set, regardless of whether the combination includes a wild symbol, wherein each wild symbol functions as at least one other non-wild symbol.

[Please amend Claim 35 as follows:]

35. (Twice Amended) A gaming device comprising:  
a processor;  
a memory device which maintains a plurality of symbols and a plurality of award yielding symbol combinations, wherein the processor communicates with the memory device to:

generate a set of symbols, wherein one of said symbols is a wild symbol;  
provide an award for each symbol combination appearing in said set, wherein said wild symbol functions as one of the symbols;  
individually substitute another wild symbol for at least one but not all other non-wild symbols in said set; and  
provide an award for each symbol combination appearing in said set, wherein each wild symbol functions as one of the symbols.

Please cancel Claim 36 without prejudice or disclaimer.